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ASHBORNE

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE


Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1911.



ASHBORNE :

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TO THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF
ASHBORNE.

Annual Report for the Year 1911.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year ended December 31st, 1911.

The Ashborne Urban District is practically co-extensive with the town of Ashborne, and has an area of 572 acres, 8 of which consist of water. The District is situated in the valley of the Henmore, and on the adjacent northern and southern slopes of the valley, over-lying conglomerate and red sandstone. It has an elevation above sea-level varying from 380 to 580 feet.

The population at the Census of 1901 was 4039, and in 1911, 4059, an increase of only 20, as compared with 230 in the previous 10 years. As the number of births between 1901 and 1911 has exceeded the number of deaths by 490, there has evidently been extensive emigration from the District.

The number of inhabited houses in 1901 was 849, and in 1911, 930, an increase of 81 in the decade. During 1911 nine new houses were erected.

The rateable value of the Town at the end of the year was £16,971, and the assessable value £14,410. The general District Rate during the year amounted to 5/- in the £.

The occupations of the inhabitants, apart from those engaged in the ordinary business of the town, are corset-manufacturing and clock-making. A certain number find occupation as cotton hands in a mill in the adjoining district. No deleterious influences on health can be traced to these occupations.

The amount of Poor Law Relief administered during the year amounted to £357. The Workhouse Infirmary is made free use of in cases of illness among paupers in the district; Ashborne Cottage Hospital receives and treats as in-patients about 50 persons from the district each year; and a large number make use of Derby Infirmary, both as out-door and in-door patients.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

I. Water Supply.

The Water Supply of the District is derived from a well on the S.E. of Ashborne, sunk through marl and sandstone. Though rather hard the quality of the water is good, and frequent analyses have testified to its freedom from pollution. The supply is constant, and, so far, sufficient; but certain restriction on the supply were, of course, put into force during the long drought of the summer.

The number of houses supplied from this source is 870. There are still 73 houses supplied from springs, but none from surface wells, and there are no houses with no supply within a distance of 100 yards. No wells have been condemned during the year.

II. Rivers and Streams. The only stream of any importance in the District is the Henmore Brook, into which the sewage of the town formerly emptied. Analysis shows that the water of the Henmore is now quite free from pollution in its passage through the Urban District.

III. Drainage and Sewerage. The Town is now well drained and sewered, the new system consisting of Dortmund and Septic Tanks with filter beds was opened in 1910, and is, so far, working satisfactorily. The effluent is discharged into the Bentley Brook outside the Urban District, and the water of the stream, 200 yards below the outfall, now contains a slight increase of albuminoid ammonia and a larger increase of free ammonia.

IV. Closet Accommodation. The closet accommodation in the District is being steadily improved. There are now 787 houses with water closets, 4 with pail closets, 4 with privy middens, and no slop water closets. Seventeen defective privies have been improved during the year ; and closets other than water closets are converted to water closets if they become defective or a nuisance.

The Sewerage Scheme having now been completed, the question arises whether the Council should not now apply to the Local Government Board for consent to put into operation Sections 39 to 43 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act of 1907, dealing with the provision and conversion of closet accommodation.

V. Scavenging Is carried on as in previous years for practically the whole population of the District. It is done by servants of the Council, who remove house refuse weekly in covered carts to a tip-field, where the combustible parts of the refuse are set fire to. Greater care might be exercised by the men in emptying the refuse into the

carts, as they frequently spill and leave some of it on the road or pavement ; but apart from this the system appears to answer well and gives rise to no nuisance.

The cost of removing refuse (not including road-scavenging) was £143 in 1911, which is equivalent to an average cost of slightly over 3/- per house per annum.

VI. Sanitary Inspections of the District. The number of these is given in a table accompanying this Report. There have been no special nuisances requiring abatement.

VII. The following BYE-LAWS and REGULATIONS have been adopted by the Council, and are in force in the District :

New Streets and Buildings adopted	8th Dec., 1903.
Prevention of Nuisances	„ „
Common Lodging Houses	„ „
Slaughter Houses	„ „
Dairies and Cow-Sheds	„ 14th Aug., 1899.

No proceedings have had to be taken during the year under any of these Bye-laws and Regulations.

VIII. Schools. The Public Elementary Schools of the District are in a satisfactory sanitary condition. The Teachers give the Medical Officer of Health early information of any suspicious case of infectious disease in the Schools, and, though a few cases have occurred and been notified in this way, there has been no extension of the disease, a result probably due, in part, at least, to the vigilance of the Teachers. No School or Class has had to be closed during the year on account of infectious disease.

The Medical Inspection of School-children is undertaken by the Medical Officer of Health, assisted by the District Nurse, who has been appointed School Nurse.

The general appearance and cleanliness of the children has much improved since Medical Inspection began, and there is no doubt as to its advantages. The present system appears, however, to have two main defects, both, doubtless, due to financial reasons rather than to any desire on the part of the authorities to shirk the duties imposed by the Act :—

(1). The periods at which children are now examined, viz., on entering and leaving School have the objections that

(a). On entry many defects have not developed, and any which subsequently arise may go on through the whole of School life undetected.

(b). In infants, eye and ear troubles are difficult to determine, and may escape notice for many years.

(c). When defects are discovered in children about to leave, it is impossible to follow up the cases, and to bring pressure to bear on parents or guardians after the children have left School, as they do shortly after the last examination.

A third examination in the middle of School life would supply some of these deficiencies, but if this is not possible, the second examination would be of more value if it could take place at the age of 9 or 10. The first examination might also, with advantage, be postponed until the child is between 6 and 7.

(2). No provision is made for treating the teeth of children. In the Schools of this District ordinary medical and surgical ailments are not found with anything like the frequency of dental caries. Over 90% of the children have bad teeth requiring the attention of the dentist.

IX. The Food Supply

Of the District is under the constant supervision of the Inspector, with, when necessary, the assistance of the Medical Officer of Health.

Part of the MILK used in the District comes from the adjoining villages in the Ashborne Rural District, but there are 13 cow-keepers (with approximately 37 cows) on the register, and 4 milk-sellers who are not cow-keepers. The cow-sheds are generally well kept, and the cubic space per cow varies from 500 to 900 cubic feet. No cows have been condemned on account of tuberculous udders, and no action has had to be taken under the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops' Orders.

A large factory for the manufacture of condensed milk is rapidly approaching completion, so that the question of the supply of milk for local consumption will in all probability shortly give rise to some anxiety.

In order to safeguard the supply of other foods, frequent inspections are made of the food stuffs brought into the weekly market, as well as of premises where foods are made, prepared and stored. The slaughter-houses and bake-houses are regularly inspected. The latter were found entirely satisfactory throughout the year; in the slaughter-houses some minor defects were discovered, and 12 notices were served.

No action had to be taken under Section 117 of the Public Health Act of 1875, and no tuberculous meat was discovered.

X. Housing.

All the dwelling-houses in the District under and up to a rental of £16 per annum have been inspected under Section 17 of the Act of 1909, and ten were considered unfit for human habitation. In the whole of these cases representations were made to the local authority to issue

closing orders. Orders were made in each instance, and in 8 cases also defects have been remedied without the necessity of making orders to close. The chief defects dealt with were the need for interior repairs, and for the better paving of the yards without.

Generally speaking the houses for artisans and labourers in the Urban District of Ashborne are well arranged, well lighted, well drained, and with adequate accommodation for families of moderate size. Their situations are in most instances excellent, with abundance of open spaces around, and with clear and healthy surroundings. The chief exceptions to this are found in the poor-class property situated in the yards at the rear of Compton, Church Street, Union Street, and at Old Hill and Can Alley. A number of these cottages are very small, and have only one bedroom, or one bedroom partitioned off and made into two; and it is evident that in most cases the tenants occupy these cottages on account of their small rents. This property should have your attention at an early date; but I wish especially to call your attention to the White Horse Yard, in which there are 6 cottages in an untidy and dirty condition, and in a state of unrepair. I understand that the owner has been written to on many occasions to ask him to carry out repairs to this property, but so far practically nothing has been done. I must ask you to consider the advisability of scheduling this property under the provisions contained in the Housing and Town Planning Act.

A difficulty, however, arises that if all the worst property is scheduled there are no empty cottages in the town or in the adjoining parishes that I know of, to which these people can go. Therefore the question of additional housing accommodation must be one for consideration; and I have no doubt the Council will do all in their

power to encourage the building of working-class dwellings in the District. At the same time, I beg, with all due respect, to point out that the Local Government Board are going the wrong way about the matter, and are trying to get rid of the effect without removing the cause, so that a grave injustice may be done to the owners of such property. Many of the cottages are not fit for habitation because the persons who live in them have made them so, and if these persons are ejected and moved into better houses, the latter will quickly become as bad as the old ones. No real improvement can be expected until measures are taken to teach cleaner, tidier habits to the class of poor who live in these houses, and in some way to implant in them a desire for better homes.

A further injustice may be done to owners who are called upon to spend large sums of money in the repair of such property, in that in many instances owners are generous and considerate enough to allow the very poor, who cannot or will not pay rent regularly, to occupy these cottages for many weeks at a time without receiving a penny of rent. Under such circumstances there are few owners who can afford to lay out money on repairs, however badly needed ; and there is certainly no inducement either to private individuals or to public authorities to erect new cottages when it is certain that, on account of the difficulty of getting in rents, no adequate return can be obtained on the outlay.

Supervision is exercised over the erection of all new houses under the provisions of the New Streets and Buildings Regulations adopted by the Council in Dec., 1903.

XI. Factories and Workshops. The attached Report on the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act 1901 shows that the factories

and workshops of the District were kept under constant supervision, 90 inspections having been made by the Sanitary Inspector during the year, and 19 by the Medical Officer of Health. The only defects found (10 in number) were minor ones. There was no overcrowding, and ventilation, drainage and sanitary accommodation were satisfactory.

Home-work was carried out under good conditions, and no infectious cases occurred in the houses of outworkers.

Bake-houses were kept in a good sanitary condition, and there was no illegal occupation of underground premises for the purposes of baking.

Acute Infectious diseases. There have been no serious outbreaks of notifiable diseases in the District during 1911, in fact the town has been singularly free from Infectious Disease of every description. Besides two mild cases of Erysipelas, the only notifiable cases during the year were two cases of Diphtheria, or rather two cases in which Diphtheria Bacilli were found. One of these occurred in a boy who had been for weeks before the attack in the Ashborne Cottage Hospital; no source of the infection could be traced. The other case was simply a "carrier" who came into the District to convalesce after a slight operation, and in whose nose Diphtheria Bacilli were accidentally found, though they gave rise to no symptom of the disease.

There is no Hospital for Infectious Diseases in the District, so that after notification of a case, isolation is carried out as thoroughly as is possible in the home, contacts are kept apart and watched, and when the illness is over disinfection of the premises and belongings of the

patients with formalin is carried out by the Inspector. There is no steam disinfecter in the neighbourhood.

In the case of Diphtheria the diagnosis is always made or confirmed by bacteriological examination of the mucus of the nose or throat, and similar examinations are made before patients are allowed out of quarantine. The throats of "contacts" are also examined in the same way. Antitoxin is used for all early cases, and is supplied free of charge by the Sanitary Authority to persons who cannot afford to pay for it.

There has been no outbreak of any non-notifiable disease in the District during 1911; a few cases of chicken-pox imported into the District from Mayfield, and a single family with whooping-cough (infection imported from Swadlincote) were all the cases of this class of disease that occurred.

Tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is not common in the District. Only one case was notified under the Tuberculosis (Poor Law) Regulations, 1908, during 1911, and four cases under the Tuberculosis (Hospital) Regulations, 1911 (two from Derby Infirmary and two from the Ashborne Cottage Hospital).

There were four deaths from Tuberculous Diseases (including one from Phthisis) during 1911, which is equivalent to a death-rate of '98 per 1,000 for all Tubercular Diseases, and of '24 for Phthisis only.

There is no hospital accommodation available, but the Guardians have provided a shelter to hold two cases at the Union Workhouse.

NO OTHER DISEASES have been specially prevalent in the District, except Diarrhœa, which, though wide-spread

both among infants and adults during the very hot weather in August and September, did not give rise to any deaths.

Infant Mortality. The Infant Mortality of the District has fallen during 1911 to the lowest figure of which I have any record, viz., to 44·9 per thousand births. This compares very favourably with 103·4 in 1910, 83·3 in 1909, and 61·2 in 1908, which was up to that time the lowest infantile death-rate recorded.

Only four deaths of infants under one year of age occurred in the year, and all four were certified as due to Marasmus in children who were delicate from birth. Only one of the four was illegitimate, and its mother was not engaged in the factory.

The Notification of Births Act, 1907, has not been adopted in the District.

**The Vital
Statistics**

For the year are contained in the tables furnished by the Local Government Board, a copy of which accompanies this report.

The Vital Statistics are now calculated on returns, which are corrected by the inclusion of births and deaths of residents occurring outside the District, and by the deduction of those occurring in, but not belonging to the District, so that a strict comparison cannot be made with the returns of previous years. When allowance is made for these corrections, however, it will be seen that the number of births and the birth-rate for 1911 are slightly higher than in the previous year, although still very much below the average of the ten preceding years ; and that

the number of deaths and the death-rate again show a decided reduction both on the figures for 1910, and on the average of the previous ten years.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ERNEST A. SADLER,

Medical Officer of Health.

14th March, 1912.

REPORT OF SANITARY WORK.

Dwelling Houses.

	Notices served.	Nuisances abated.
Repaired	3	3
Closed as unfit for human habitation	2	2
Drainage defects	7	7
Insanitary closets and ash-pits	21	21

Other Defects.

Surfaces of courts and yards	9	9
Eaves-spouts and down-spouts	3	3
Offensive accumulations	12	12
Animals improperly kept	17	17
Pig sties	1	1
Overcrowding	6	6
Foul condition of houses	15	15
	<hr/> 96	<hr/> 96

In addition to these matters a number of notices have been served, and nuisances abated for several minor defects.

No. on Register. Inspections made. Notices served.

Dairies, cow-sheds, and			
milk-shops	13	39	1
Bake-houses	10	20	0
Slaughter houses	10	130	12
Common Lodging Houses	2	12	6
	<hr/> 35	<hr/> 201	<hr/> 19

Notifiable Infectious Diseases.

Infected rooms have been fumigated with formalin and disinfectants supplied.

Housing of the Working Classes Acts.

Inspections have been made under these Acts as follows :—

Houses demolished being unfit
for human habitation.
10

Sanitary defects to houses and
premises made good.
8

Factories, Workshops, and Workplaces.

	Inspections.	Nuisances abated, &c.
Factories	31	0
Workshops	59	20

House Refuse.

This refuse has been removed each week and destructed at the Mayfield Road tip-field.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

New branch sewers have been laid through the Corset Works property and Malbon's Yard and connected to the new main sewer in the Station Hotel Paddock.

Lengths of Sewers, and Manholes, have been cleaned out with the use of sewer buckets.

The Sewage Effluent, after treatment at the Sewage Disposal Works, appears to give satisfactory results. No complaint has been received since the Works were laid down in July, 1910.

Aluminoferrie is used in the conduit carrier of the tanks as a sewage precipitant.

Several inspections at the works have been made and instructions have been given as to the treatment of the sewage.

Water Supplies.

Two samples of the Town Water Supply were submitted to the County Analyst and the analyses showed that the water was of very satisfactory quality for drinking purposes.

A new water main was laid between Buxton Road and Windmill Lane for supplying Town Water to the Children's Home.

J. ABBOTT.

